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Statistical Commission
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5-8 March 2002
Item 7 (i) of the provisional agenda*
Activities not classified by field: follow-up to Economic and Social Council policy decisions

Policy decisions of the Economic and Social Council that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission

Note by the Secretary-General

Elements of the policy decisions of the Economic and Social Council in 2001 that have relevance to the work of the Statistical Commission are set out below, along with an indication of the actions taken and proposed to be taken by the Commission and the United Nations Statistics Division. The Commission may wish to review the actions taken and planned and assess whether they are appropriate in relation to the policy decisions of the Council.

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Elements of the policy decisions of the Economic and Social Council that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission

Policy decision	*Action requested by the Council*	*Action taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the United Nations Statistics Division*
Resolution 2001/21		
Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits	1. *Recalls* that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the relevant functional commissions or, as appropriate, other relevant bodies of the United Nations system, will continue to play, within their respective mandates, the primary role with regard to follow-up and in coordinating and implementing the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits;	The principal relevant responsibility of the Statistical Commission is in the coordination of development indicators in the context of the follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, which is covered under agenda item 7 (e), "Coordination of development indicators" (E/CN.3/2002/25 and 26).
	3. *Underlines* the specific responsibilities of the relevant functional commissions and, as appropriate, other relevant bodies of the United Nations system, in reviewing and assessing progress achieved, lessons learned and problems encountered in the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits;	
Resolution 2001/27		
Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B: improving the working methods of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council	3. *Invites* its functional commissions to provide concise, action-oriented input to its annual high-level and/or coordination segments, for example by utilizing, as applicable, their standing agenda item on new trends and emerging issues affecting the overall goals within their mandates; (the high level and/or coordination segments in 2002 relate to (a) human resources development and (b) the United Nations Millennium Declaration; see decision 2001/299 below);	In the work programme of the United Nations Statistics Division, there are training workshops to train statisticians in developing countries in a range of statistical fields. The work of the Commission in relation to the Millennium Declaration is covered under agenda item 7 (e) "Coordination of development indicators" (see E/CN.3/2002/25 and 26).
	5. *Encourages* its functional commissions to consider how best to	The Commission tries as far as possible to retain the same members

Policy decision	*Action requested by the Council*	*Action taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the United Nations Statistics Division*
	ensure continuity in the work of their successive bureaux, and to that end requests the Secretary-General to include a summary of the functional commissions' views, if any, in the next consolidated report;	of the Bureau for at least a two-year period to cover successive sessions of the Commission. Also, an effort is made to include in the Bureau representatives who have participated in previous sessions of the Commission.
	8. *Encourages* the functional commissions to continue to keep their working methods under review;	The Commission has regularly reviewed its functioning both through a formal item on its agenda and through discussion under other agenda items, when considered appropriate; see, for example, the discussion under the item "Coordination and integration of international statistical programmes" at the thirtieth session of the Commission (1999).[a]
	9. *Urges* its functional commissions to further develop opportunities for sharing national experience during annual sessions, in particular with regard to the implementation of conference outcomes, and to allocate an appropriate amount of time for that purpose at their annual sessions;	The Commission encourages members and observers to share national experience during sessions through issuance of country reports as background documents.
	10. *Encourages* its functional commissions to consider, as appropriate and within existing resources, holding joint bureaux meetings to discuss coordination on issues that are addressed by two or more commissions, using information technology, as required;	The Secretariat has reviewed the work programmes of the other functional commissions; while no subjects have been found that would call for joint bureaux meetings at this stage, the Secretariat will keep that possible approach in mind (for the current and planned work of the other functional commissions, see E/2001/95).
	11. *Also encourages* its functional commissions, within existing resources, to share more systematically the outcome of their work, including through communications among chairpersons or through briefings by the Secretariat;	Currently, the United Nations Statistics Division reviews the proceedings of each session of the Statistical Commission and transmits relevant documents and relevant extracts from the report of the Commission on each session to the Secretariat offices that serve each of the other functional commissions, for

Policy decision	*Action requested by the Council*	*Action taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the United Nations Statistics Division*
		presentation to those functional commissions, as appropriate.
	12. *Further encourages* its functional commissions to identify similar or related topics and, in this context, requests the Secretary-General, inter alia, to present a joint report on such topics, where appropriate;	In preparing reports for the Statistical Commission, the United Nations Statistics Division ensures that any necessary input is obtained from the Secretariat units that support the other functional commissions, as was recently the case in respect of the Commissions on Sustainable Development and for Social Development.
	16. *Also invites* its functional commissions to strengthen their attention to the role of information and communication technologies for development in their areas of responsibility;	The United Nations Statistic Division is carrying out two projects under the United Nations Development Account, one in the region of the Caribbean Community (1999-2001) and one in the region of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (2000-2002), which include the upgrading of information technology and hardware to create a platform for communication for data exchange. A third project is scheduled for the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (2002-2004). The Division also has an interregional adviser on computers and informatics, who provides short-term advisory services to developing countries and countries in transition in the field of computers and informatics and their statistical application. The multi-year programme of work of the Commission includes the item "Definition and measurement of the so-called information society" in 2005 (see E/CN.3/2002/L.4).
	17. *Welcomes* its functional commissions' efforts to mainstream a gender perspective in their work;	Gender mainstreaming is reflected in the range of development indicators considered by the Commission in the context of follow-up to the United Nations conferences and summits,

Policy decision	*Action requested by the Council*	*Action taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the United Nations Statistics Division*
		which is covered under agenda item 7 (e) "Coordination of development indicators" (see E/CN.3/2002/25 and 26). Gender mainstreaming is being promoted in the United Nations Statistics Division through a series of working groups.
	18. *Encourages* its functional commissions to continue to coordinate their work, in particular in areas of common interest, by, for example, biennializing items or making use of joint reports;	The Commission, in its multi-year programme of work, has biennialized several subjects, particularly the work of city groups and task forces functioning in various statistical areas, work on demographic and social statistics, management issues in national statistical offices and statistical capacity-building.
	19. *Agrees* to take steps to integrate the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS into its own work,[b] based on the decision of the Assembly at that special session, and requests the functional commissions to do the same for effective implementation and follow-up.	The Commission included HIV/AIDS on the agenda of its thirty-first session in 2000,[c] and at its thirty-third session has an agenda item 3 (c) entitled "Health statistics" (see E/CN.3/2002/4). HIV/AIDS is also covered under agenda item 7 (e), "Coordination of development indicators"; several indicators (eight) on HIV/AIDS are included.
	20. *Welcomes* the attention given by several of its functional commissions to cross-cutting dimensions in relation to all aspects of human settlements, and invites relevant commissions to seek greater interaction on these issues;	Human settlements statistics were considered by the Commission at its thirty-second session, in 2001,[d] on the basis of a report prepared by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, and the results brought to the attention of the Commission on Human Settlements. The subject is included in the multi-year programme of work for the Statistical Commission in 2004 (see E/CN.3/2002/L.4).
	21. *Invites* its functional commissions to provide further inputs into the Council's own work on means of implementations, including the role of resource mobilization, capacity-building, research and data collection,	Statistical capacity-building is covered under agenda item 6 (see E/CN.3/2002/18 and 19). Statistical capacity-building is also an integral part of the work on harmonization of development indicators (see agenda

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	and information- and knowledge-sharing in their respective areas, with a particular focus on impact, gaps, good practices and lessons learned, and the types of capacity-building most commonly sought in the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit.	item 7 (e) and documents E/CN.3/2002/25 and 26).
	22. *Also invites* its functional commissions to continue to explore opportunities for effective and productive contribution to their work by relevant stakeholders;	The Commission involves relevant NGOs and non-United Nations intergovernmental organizations in its work on an ongoing basis.
Resolution 2001/41		
Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system	3. *Also calls upon* the Secretary-General and all bodies reporting to the Economic and Social Council to address the gender aspects of issues before the Council in their reports;	Gender mainstreaming is reflected in the range of development indicators considered by the Commission in the context of follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, which is covered under agenda item 7 (e), "Coordination of development indicators" (see E/CN.3/2002/25 and 26). Gender mainstreaming is being promoted in the United Nations Statistics Division through a series of working groups.
Decision 2001/299		
Themes for the high-level and coordination segments of the substantive session of 2002 of the Economic and Social Council	At its 43rd plenary meeting, on 26 July 2001, the Economic and Social Council decided to adopt the following themes for the high-level and coordination segments of its substantive session of 2002:	
	High-level segment	
	The contribution of human resources development, including in the areas of health and education, to the process of development	In the work programme of the United Nations Statistics Division, there are training workshops to train statisticians in developing countries in a range of statistical fields.

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	Coordination segment	
	Strengthening further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements, to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter of the United Nations as contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration	The work of the Commission in relation to the Millennium Declaration is covered in the thirty-third session of the Commission under agenda item 7 (e) "Coordination of development indicators" (see E/CN.3/2002/25 and 26).
Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2001 of the Council, entitled "The role of the United Nations in support of the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development"		The work of the Commission on the harmonization of development indicators and the Millennium Declaration, particularly statistical capacity-building, covered under agenda item 7 (e) "Coordination of development indicators", is relevant (see E/CN.3/2002/25 and 26).
Agreed conclusions 2001/1 of the Council, concerning the role of the United Nations in promoting development particularly with respect to access to and transfer of knowledge and technology, especially information and communications technologies, inter alia, through partnership with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector.		(See above action under Council resolution 2001/27, para. 16.)

[a] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 4* (E/1999/24), chap. IX.
[b] See General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.
[c] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 4* (E/2000/24), paras. 25 and 26.
[d] Ibid., *2001, Supplement No. 4* (E/2001/24), para. 5.

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Statistical Commission
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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*
Provisional agenda and dates for the thirty-fourth session of the Commission

Activities of the functional commissions that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission

Note by the Secretary-General

The present note has been prepared in an effort to promote harmonization and coordination in the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. The purpose of the note is to inform the Statistical Commission of the ongoing activities of two functional commissions that are related to its work, namely the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Statistical Commission may wish to take the present note into account during its review of agenda items 3 (Demographic and social statistics) and 5 (Natural resources and environment statistics), in deciding the agenda for its thirty-fourth session and in amending its multi-year programme.

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01-70867 (E) 280102

Activities of the functional commissions that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
1.	Commission on Population and Development	1–9	2
2.	Commission on Sustainable Development	10–18	3

I. Commission on Population and Development

1. The thirty-fourth session of the Commission on Population and Development was held at United Nations Headquarters from 2 to 6 April 2001; its special theme for that session was "Population, environment and development".

Documents before the Commission on Population and Development

2. A report on world population monitoring, focused on the theme of the session, analysed recent information and policy perspectives on population, environment and development. Topics investigated in the report included trends in population, environment and development; government views and policies concerning population, environment and development; population size and growth, environment and development; migration, population change and the rural environment; health, mortality, fertility and the environment; and population environment and development in urban settings.

3. Other reports covered flows of international financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development; world demographic trends; programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2000; and the draft programme of work of the United Nations Population Division for the biennium 2002-2003.

Follow-up actions taken by the Commission on Population and Development

4. The Commission adopted a resolution concerning population, environment and development, in which the Commission requested the Population Division to continue its research on the linkages among population, consumption and production, the environment and natural resources, and human health, giving particular attention to the levels, trends and differentials of mortality, fertility, distribution and mobility, and the role of population and development policies as well as the mainstreaming of a gender perspective. It also requested the Population Division to contribute its research findings to the preparatory process for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), the World Summit on Sustainable Development and other relevant intergovernmental meetings and conferences. It further requested that the findings from this and related research on population, environment and development should contribute to the next review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, scheduled for 2004.

5. The Commission also approved the draft provisional agenda for its thirty-fifth session, to be held in 2002, and adopted its report on its thirty-fourth session.

6. The special theme for the next meeting of the Commission in 2002 will focus on reproductive rights and reproductive health, with special reference to HIV/AIDS, as contained in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Implications for the Statistical Commission

7. The Commission on Population Development is a major stakeholder and technical user of the national demographic and social statistics compiled and disseminated under the auspices of the Statistical Commission, with special attention to statistics derived from national population and housing censuses, inter-

censal household surveys and vital statistics systems. Demographic and social data produced by national statistical services are reported to the United Nations and disseminated annually through the *United Nations Demographic Yearbook* and quarterly through the *Population and Vital Statistics Report*. Those statistics provide important inputs to a wide range of population and socio-economic monitoring reports prepared for United Nations functional commissions.

8. The ACC Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projections coordinates its activities with those of the ACC Committee on Statistical Activities. Actions taken by the Statistical Commission regarding principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses, vital statistics systems, statistics of international migration and the improvement of population and household surveys help to strengthen and maintain that well established international source of national demographic and social data, covering over 200 countries and areas.

9. The Statistical Commission may wish to note the coordinating mechanisms between the Statistical Commission and the Commission on Population and Development, and also to note the importance of completing and strengthening the current World Population and Housing Census Programme (1995-2004) as it relates to the common concerns and work of the two Commissions.

II. Commission on Sustainable Development

Ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

10. The ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development was held from 16 to 27 April 2001; its sectoral themes were atmosphere, energy and transport. The Commission also gave in-depth attention to the cross-sectoral themes of international cooperation for an enabling environment, in particular, resources for development, and information for decision-making and participation.

11. The Commission recognized that the availability and uses of information are issues that cut across all chapters of Agenda 21 and its implementation. Enhancing information for decision-making in order to achieve sustainable development requires international cooperation and actions compatible with national priorities. The Commission requested international organizations to rationalize their requests for information so as to avoid duplication and unnecessary burden on countries; urged strengthened cooperation, coordination and the development of information systems enabling sharing of valuable data; and encouraged further work on indicators that might form a starting point for national work on the implementation of and follow-up to sustainable development. It also recalled the invitation of the Economic and Social Council to the Statistical Commission to serve as an intergovernmental focal point for the review of the indicators used by the United Nations system. It noted that significant gaps exist in the availability of data and encouraged developed countries, with the cooperation of international organizations, to assist developing countries in the strengthening of national information systems and statistical agencies so as to ensure efficient data collection and analysis.

12. At its ninth session, the Commission completed its 1998-2002 work programme devoted to specific sectoral and cross-sectoral themes emanating from Agenda 21 and its five-year review held in 1997.

Preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development

13. In its resolution 55/199, entitled "Ten-year review of progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development", the General Assembly decided that the tenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development should be transformed into an open-ended preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The organizational session of the Commission acting as the preparatory committee was held from 30 April to 2 May 2001. The Commission acting as the preparatory committee carried out an initial review of progress at the local, national, subregional, regional and international levels, as well as by major groups, and adopted several decisions relating to future preparatory work.

14. Agreement on the key themes for further implementation of Agenda 21 will be addressed at subsequent sessions of the Commission acting as the preparatory committee to be held between January and June 2002. The second session will undertake the

comprehensive review and assessment of progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and will prepare a draft document on the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. The third session will agree on the text of the document containing the results of the review and assessment, as well as on conclusions and recommendations for further actions. There will also be a proposal regarding the provisional agenda and possible main themes for the Summit. The fourth and final preparatory session will be held at the ministerial level and will agree on a concise political document to be submitted to the Summit.

15. The Summit will be held in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002. A new multi-year programme of work for the Commission, to start in 2003, is expected to result from the Summit.

Implications for the Statistical Commission

16. Agenda 21 addresses the needs for regular data and information in chapter 40 (Information for decision-making) and chapter 8 (Integrating environment and development in decision-making), section D (Establishing systems for integrated environmental and economic accounting), in both places assigning tasks to the United Nations Statistics Division for implementation. Accordingly, the Division is contributing to the comprehensive review of the progress achieved in the implementation of chapter 40 and chapter 8, section D, of Agenda 21.

17. A progress review was provided to the Statistical Commission at its thirty-second session (see E/CN.3/2001/15). A follow-up to that review and an analysis of areas where further implementation should focus are before the Commission (see E/CN.3/2002/16).

18. The Commission may wish to note the importance of participating in the preparatory process of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and at its thirty-fourth session may wish to review its work programme in the area of environment statistics and accounting in the light of the results of the Summit and their statistical implications.